Self-Sufficiency in Foodgrains Production

2307. SHRI NARENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the statement made by the noted agriculture expert Shri M.S. Swaminathan that "Foodgrain production will have to grow at five million tonne a year in the next two decades if the country has to sustain food self-sufficiency" and that by 2020 the total foodgrain output have to be raised to 300 million tonnes; and

(b) if so, what steps Government propose to take so that India could sustain self-sufficiency in food?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) Prof. M.S. Swaminathan in his inaugural address to the International Conference on "Managing Natural Resources for Sustainable Agricultural Production in the 21st Century" held at New Delhi on 14.2.2000, had referred to the projected foodgrains requirement of about 300 million tonnes by the year 2020 by Prof. G.S. Bhalla and others. It was also mentioned that to achieve these targets, foodgrain production must increase at the rate of 5 million tonnes per year over the next two decades.

(b) In order to achieve the goals of doubling food production and making India hunger-free in ten years, a regionally differentiated strategy, based on agro-climatic regional planning, which takes into account agronomic, climatic and environmental conditions has been adopted in the Ninth Plan, to realise the full potential of growth in every region.

Benefit of subsidy to poor farmers

†2308. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether due to the subsidy given on fertilizers a kind of situation is arisen where it has affected the fertility of soil and environmentalists are much worried about it;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto;

(c) whether big landlords are getting the benefit of this subsidy instead of poor farmers; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(d) if so, the positive steps taken to ensure that the poor farmers are also benefited by this?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) and (b) Under the existing scheme, Urea is the only fertilizer under the statutory price control. In the case of decontrolled Phosphatic and Potassic fertilizers like Di-Ammonium Phosphate (DAP), Muriate of Potash (MOP), Single Super Phosphate (SSP) and Complex fertilizers, a scheme is in operation to provide concession to manufacturers and importers to enable them to sell these fertilizers at a reduced price indicated by Central/State Governments.

Even with these concessions the average consumption of ferilizer nutrients (NPK) in India is about 90Kg./ha. The ferilizer use gives economic resonse and higher yields even at much higher doses of fertilizer application, hence, the present level can not be described as high or excessive.The nutrient consumption in Pakistan, in broadly identical situation is 113 Kg./ha., in Bangladesh 135 Kg./ha. and in Sri Lanka 160 Kg./ha. The consumption in developed countries is much higher being 375 Kg./ha. In Japan, 542 Kg./ha. in Netherlands and 379 Kg./ha. in U.K.

At this level of ferilizers consumption in India, there may not be any cause for concern to environmentalists.

(c) and (d) Urea, which is the only controlled fertilizer is available to the farmers, including small and marginal farmers, at a subsidised statutory farm-gate price. Decontolled fertilizer like DAP, MOP, SSP and complexes are also available to the farmers at concessional rates.

New Agricultural Policy

2309. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to announce a national Agriculture Policy;

(b) if so, what will be the main focus of the policy; and

(c) by when it is likely to be announced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a)Yes, Sir.

(b) The policy will seek to promote technically sound, economically viable,